

# Structure of an Interpretive Response

**5 Parts NOT ~~5 Paragraphs~~**

# Part 1: Introduction



1. Hook the reader's attention



2. Map the issue.  
Ask, why is it even an argument?

**CLAIM**

3. What is your claim or thesis?  
What do you plan to prove?

# Part 1: Thesis or Claim 1<sup>st</sup> steps

## THESIS GENERATOR: Literary Papers

**For a Literary Paper, I use the Following:**

**Example:**

1. Identify the *subject* of your paper

The development of one's own identity

2. Turn your subject into a guiding question

How does a young man go about developing his own identity apart from his parents?

3. Answer your question with a statement

Telemachus realizes he must set out on his own journey to find his identity.

4. Refine this statement into a *working* thesis

In the absence of his father, Telemachus assumes the role, sending himself on a quest that will transform him into the man he needs to be.

# Part 1: Thesis or Claim 2<sup>nd</sup> revision

Refine this statement into a *working* thesis

1. Make the topic specific	2. Continue with a debatable phrase	3. Explain the significance to the audience
Exactly who? When? How many? Which ones? Where?	does... does not... should... should not... highlights... ignores...	, proving that... , resulting in... , making us doubt... , reminding us that...
<p>EXAMPLE 1: A longer school day in Greenville next year does not guarantee that students will be more productive in class, reminding us that adolescents need to find learning relevant.</p> <p>EXAMPLE 2: The longer the school day in Greenville next year guarantees more learning opportunities, resulting in higher graduation rate and an increase in student success.</p>		

# Part 1: Thesis or Claim 3<sup>rd</sup> Revision

Refine this statement into a *working* thesis

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1. Is there a focus character or scene?
2. Prompt is addressed?
3. Title of the work?
4. Author?
5. Strong analytical verb?
6. Meaning of the work as a whole?

# Part 1: Thesis or Claim

Refine this statement into a *working* thesis

From the moment Nora bustles in the door with her holiday gifts until she slams it shut on Torvald at the close of *A Doll's House*, Ibsen illustrates the difficulty of a woman asserting her individuality in Nineteenth century Norway.

**Focus Character** (red arrow pointing to Nora)

**Beginning Scene** (blue arrow pointing to bustles in the door)

**Closing Scene** (green arrow pointing to slams it shut)

**Title of work** (black arrow pointing to *A Doll's House*)  
(with correct punctuation)

**Author** (black arrow pointing to Ibsen)

**Strong Analytical Verb** (purple arrow pointing to illustrates)

**MOWAW** (blue arrow pointing to the difficulty of a woman asserting her individuality in Nineteenth century Norway)  
Meaning of the work as a whole

## 2. *Think About the Issue/prompt...*

- What needs to be defined?
- What needs to be reviewed?
- What needs to be clarified?



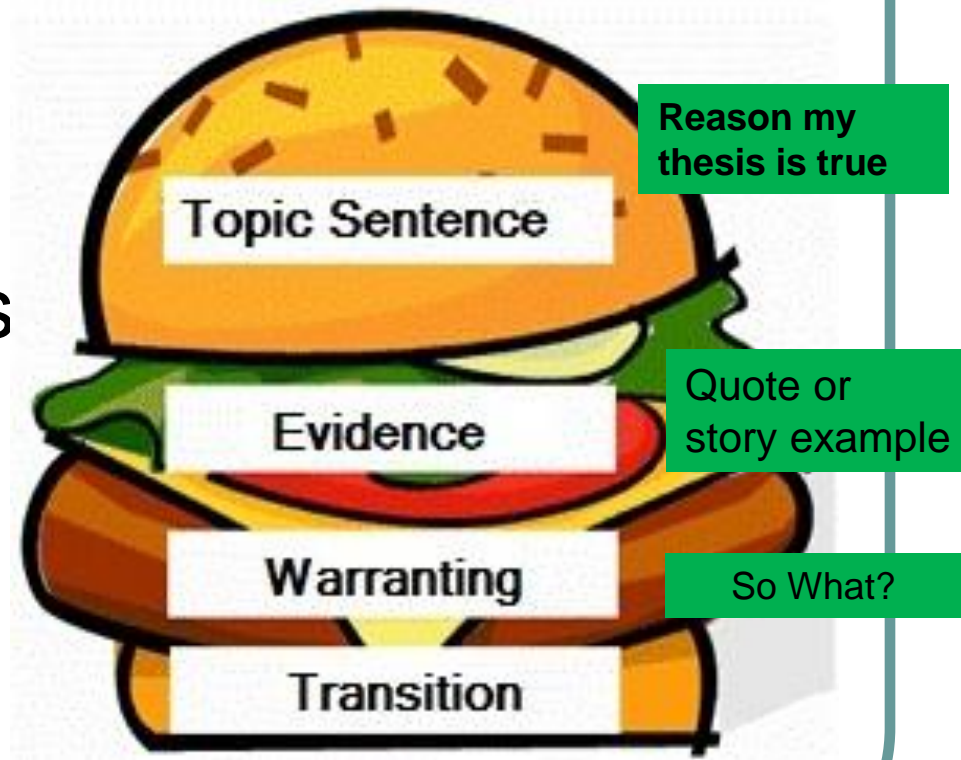
Clarifying



### 3. Body Paragraphs

- What supports my argument?

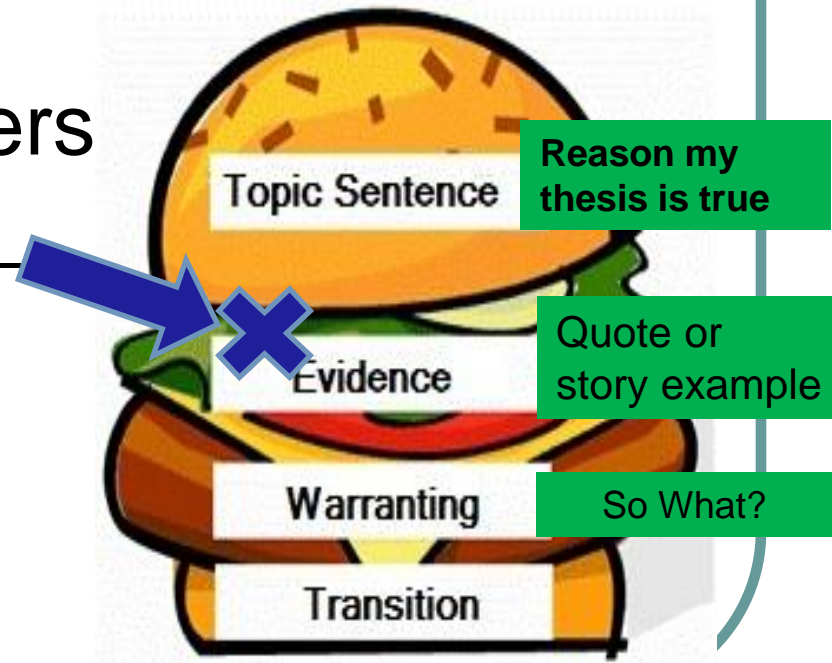
This constitutes several paragraphs with reasons, evidence and warrants.





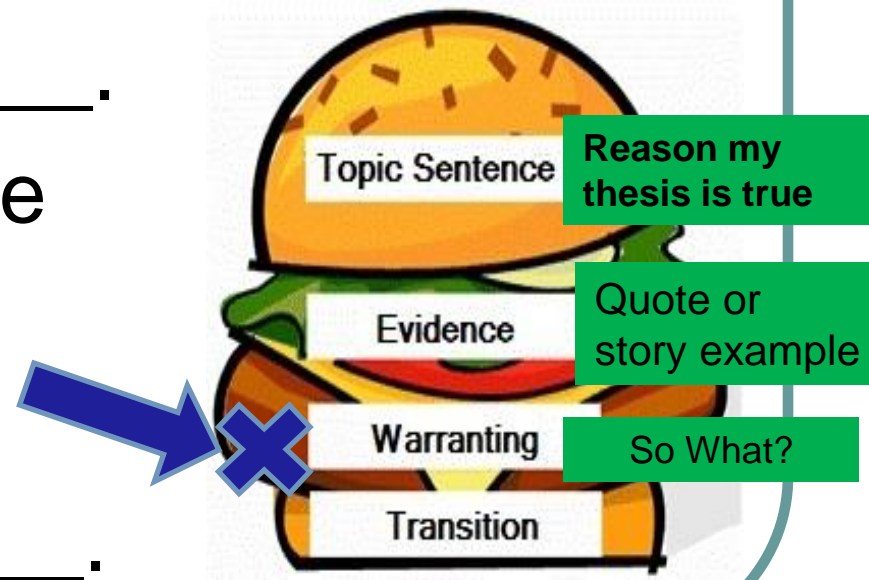
### 3. Introducing Quotes or examples

- \_\_\_\_ states, “ \_\_\_\_.”
- According to \_\_\_\_, “ \_\_\_\_.”
- In \_\_\_\_’s view, “ \_\_\_\_.”
- \_\_\_\_ complicates matters further when \_\_\_\_
- In \_\_\_\_’s view, \_\_\_\_.



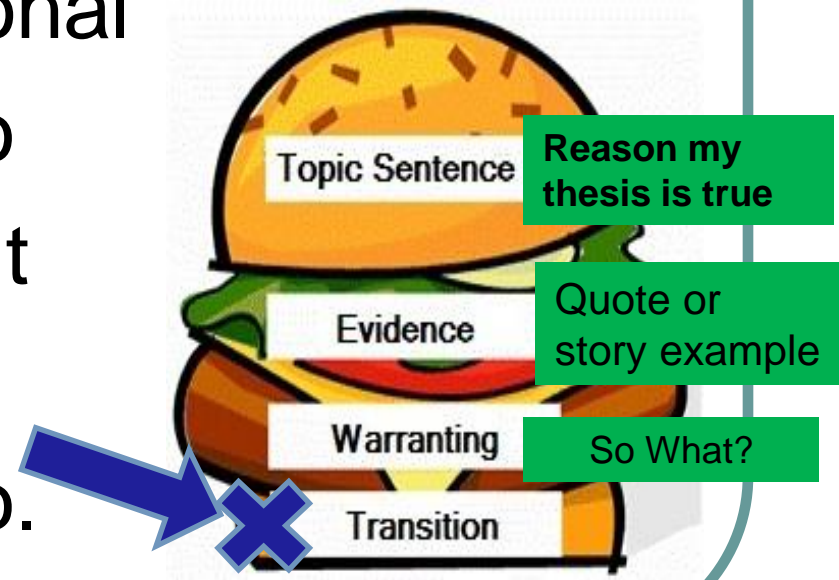
### 3. Warranting or Explaining Quotes

- Basically, \_\_\_\_ is saying that \_\_\_\_.
- In other words, \_\_\_\_ believes \_\_\_\_.
- In making this comment, \_\_\_\_ urges us to \_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_ is corroborating the idea that \_\_\_\_.
- The essence of this (scene, comment) is \_\_\_\_.



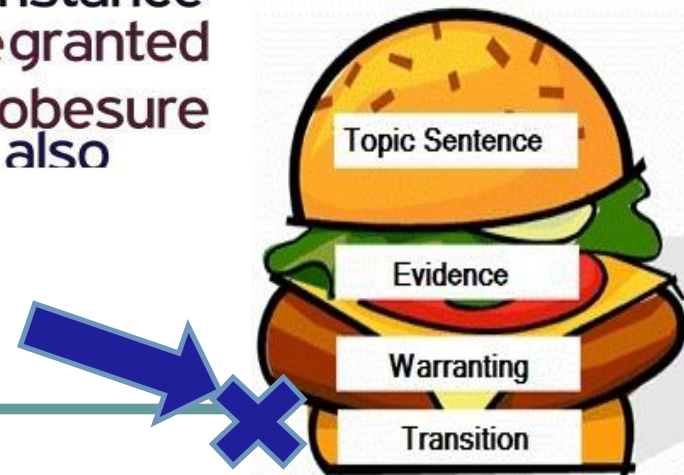
### 3. Transitions

- As a writer, you've got to tie the ideas in your last sentence to your next sentence of the new paragraph. Transitions and transitional phrases help writers do this. Choosing the right transition depends on what you're trying to do.



# 3. Transitions

of course  
after all however  
while yet thus  
ultimately naturally furthermore  
hence therefore consider conversely  
regardless accordingly nonetheless since  
similarly even though by contrast  
consequently as an illustration to put it another way  
indeed on the other hand that is **as a result**  
admittedly although specifically on the contrary  
in conclusion in contrast in other words for example  
actually whereas despite in addition for instance  
besides moreover likewise granted  
in short to be sure  
also



## 4. Refutation

- What will skeptics say and how will I refute these views?
- This may be woven into confirmation paragraphs or as separate ones.




# 4. Refutation

- On one hand, it can be argued that \_\_\_\_\_.  
From this perspective, \_\_\_\_\_. On the  
other hand, however, the argument can be made that  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- In the words of one of the protagonists,  
\_\_\_\_\_. According to \_\_\_\_\_'s  
views \_\_\_\_\_. This view  
supports/refutes the idea \_\_\_\_\_.
- In sum, then, the issue is whether \_\_\_\_\_  
or \_\_\_\_\_.



# 5. Conclusion

- What are the benefits or implications of accepting my interpretation?
- How does my interpretation impact readers?
- What is the effect of understanding this?



**A conclusion  
is the point  
where one got tired  
of thinking.**



# The Parts of the Interpretive Response

**INTRODUCTION**  
(Hook, Map, Thesis)

**BACKGROUND ISSUE**  
Why is this important to discuss?  
(May be part of the intro or body)

**CONFIRMATION**  
(Paragraphing support with reasons, evidence and warrants)

**REFUTATION**  
(Counterclaims and Rebuttals within other paragraphs)

**CONCLUSION**  
(Benefits, Implications, Call to Action)

# Work Cited

Burke, J. (2012). *The English Teacher's Companion* (fourth ed., p. 87).

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Adapted from Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010.

Adapted from Salazar, Ray. "Stop Boring Students (and Yourself) with Five-Paragraph Essays." Michigan Reading Association Annual Conference. Grand Rapids, MI. 9 Mar. 2013. Breakout Session.